

PUBLIC PRINTING.

LETTER

FROM

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC PRINTING,

TRANSMITTING

A report of the condition of the public printing during the year 1860.

DECEMBER 10, 1860.—Referred to the Committee on Printing.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT PUBLIC PRINTING,
Washington, December 10, 1861.

SIR: The continued absence from this city of Thomas H. Ford, esq., House printer, and the refusal of Messrs. Larcombe & English, who executed for him the printing ordered at the last session of Congress, to continue that arrangement, make it my duty to communicate the facts to the House of Representatives, and to respectfully request its direction as to the printing of the present session, a considerable portion of which is now in this office, the immediate completion of which is urgently required for the exigencies of the public service.

The reasons of Messrs. Larcombe & English for the course they have pursued are assigned in the accompanying letter. It is but justice to them to state that the work intrusted to them heretofore by this office has been executed promptly and satisfactorily.

In this connexion I deem it proper to state that, in pursuance of the provisions of the joint resolution in relation to the public printing approved June 23, 1860, I have entered into a contract with Mr. Joseph T. Crowell for the purchase of the printing establishment formerly owned by Mr. Cornelius Wendell, which contract I have transmitted to the Joint Committee on the Public Printing. Should it meet their approval, the entire printing and binding of all the branches of the government, or any portion thereof, can at once be executed under its own control and by its own officers. The expediency and propriety of such a policy I have heretofore strongly advocated, and present experience has but strengthened my convictions upon the subject.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
JOHN HEART,
Superintendent.

Hon. WILLIAM PENNINGTON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

WASHINGTON, *December 8, 1860.*

SIR: Having executed the printing for the House of Representatives for the first session of the 36th Congress, under a contract or partnership with Thomas H. Ford, House printer, and, as we trust and believe, to your entire satisfaction, we deem it due to you to inform you that we cannot any longer continue our contract with the House printer.

The reason for taking this step lies in the fact that Congress, at the last session, reduced the prices to be paid for printing 40 per cent. below the prices paid at the time we made our contract with the present House printer, leaving barely enough, as we believe, to pay the actual cost of the work.

While, therefore, we would be willing to execute the printing for the House of Representatives directly, for the prices now allowed by law, we cannot consent to do it for any intermediate party.

We are anxious to keep our office employed; our relations to those who constitute the establishment impel us to obtain all the work we can; but it could not be expected of us to execute it at a sacrifice.

We are, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

LARCOMBE & ENGLISH.

JOHN HEART, Esq.,

Superintendent of the Public Printing.